

## STUDY PROJECTS

## COLORED GULL STUDY

California, Franklin's, and Ring-billed Gulls are being individually marked near Calgary, Alberta, Canada, as part of a three year study of their local movements. All marked gulls have had four colored jesses attached to their legs in the following manner: two jesses per leg, one above and one below the tibia-tarsus joint on each leg. Black, blue, green, orange, white, and yellow jesses are being used. In addition, portions of the gull's plumage may be dyed green, orange or red. This marking program will be continued through the 1972 season.

Reports of sight records of these marked gulls would be greatly appreciated. Please include date, time and location of sighting, color and location of plumage dye and color and location of each jess.

Reports should be sent to D. Vaughn Weseloh, Dept. of Biology, University of Calgary, Calgary 44, Alberta, Canada.

## GREAT BLUE HERON SURVEY

At the top of the aquatic food-chain, the Great Blue Heron may well be an important indicator species. The Laboratory of Ornithology is planning a nation-wide survey of this species.

The first step will be to compile an inventory of heronries. To this end, we appeal to all readers with knowledge on this point to write to us. Information may be recent or old; detailed or sketchy. Even "I remember seeing a heronry as a boy" is helpful if the site is remembered well enough to locate on a topographic map.

We hope that this inventory will contain the exact locality of the heronry, a general description of the site, and as much history as possible. We hope that this stage of the program can be completed by the winter so that arrangements can be made for census work in the 1972 breeding season.—DAVID B. PEAKALL, Laboratory of Ornithology, Cornell University.

## PURPLE MARTIN SURVEY

The Purple Martin that nests in bird apartment houses in our back yards and gardens once nested exclusively in natural cavities—now it nests almost exclusively in man-made bird houses. Because of our ability to rapidly change the environment, it is particularly important that we watch wildlife populations for changes that might be due to our upsetting the balance of nature. Like the canary in a coal mine, changes in Purple Martin populations might serve as an indicator that something is wrong in our environment. While our long range goal is to monitor population levels of Purple Martins over a period of many years, our short term goals are: 1) to learn more about the breeding biology of this species (for example, can the Purple Martin raise more than one brood a year in the south?); 2) to learn more about the relationship between Purple Martins and their nest hole competitors (for example, Starlings, House Sparrows, Tree Swallows, Flying Squirrels); 3) to learn more about the migration of this species and the factors influencing the arrival and departure of the birds. All persons maintaining martin boxes are urged to respond to the questionnaire which may be obtained from the Laboratory of Ornithology, or from Dr. Jerome A. Jackson, P. O. Drawer Z, Department of Zoology, Mississippi State University, State College, Mississippi 39762.

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